

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-23565-5 - Women in Love

D. H. Lawrence Edited by David Farmer Lindeth Vasey and John Worthen

Excerpt

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Note on the text

The base-text for this edition is the corrected final typescript (TSII) which was typed early in 1917 and which DHL finally revised for publication in September 1919; it was the copy from which a clean typescript was made for Thomas Seltzer's first American edition (A1) and for Martin Secker's first English edition (E1). TSII is in the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Emendations have been adopted from DHL's own typescript (TSIa and TSIb) up to the end of chapter XXII and from his manuscript (MS) and from revisions to the second part of the typescript, prepared by Pinker; from DHL's revisions in the duplicate surviving page proofs (EP) for E1; and from the revisions which must have been in the set of page proofs returned to Secker for E1. In addition, the apparatus records the changes and omissions required by both Seltzer and Secker for censorship purposes (some made without consulting DHL), and the changes, some made by DHL, which were forced on Secker and DHL by Philip Heseltine's threat of a libel suit (see Introduction, pp. xlix–l). Also, Frieda Lawrence assisted DHL by copying revisions into TSIa and TSIb: in doing so, she made errors or introduced changes of her own, and these are recorded (see Introduction, pp. xxxii, lix–lx and also Explanatory notes).

1. Clearly inadvertent spelling and typesetting errors have been corrected. DHL occasionally closed conversation with a comma, changed the punctuation but failed to delete the superfluous comma, e.g. 'now?', (240:15); the comma has been silently deleted.

2. Inadvertent omissions, i.e. incomplete quotations marks and full stops omitted at the end of sentences where no other punctuation exists, have been supplied. Omitted or misplaced apostrophes in possessive case, colloquial contractions and the apostrophe in 'o'clock' have been supplied or corrected.

3. DHL often wrote and sometimes typed colloquial contractions without joining them up, e.g. 'does n't', and typed them without the apostrophe, 'dont', while Frieda sometimes misplaced the apostrophe, 'does'nt'; these have been normalised, 'doesn't'.

4. The typists of the second part of TSI and of TSII, and A1 and E1 consistently presented 'to-day', 'to-morrow', 'to-night' and 'good-bye', 'good-night' (DHL wrote and typed these as one unhyphenated word); TSII and A1 gave 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' (DHL usually wrote and typed them without the full stop); A1 sometimes house-styled '-is-' to '-iz-' (DHL wrote 'realise' and 'civilised'). In all these instances, DHL's practice has been preserved.

5. DHL often followed a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark with a dash before beginning the next sentence with a capital letter, e.g. 'consideration.—One' (21:6). His typists and the typesetter of E1 frequently omitted the dash, which has been restored in this edition. A1 and E1 printed punctuation following an italicised word in italics, e.g. '*Really!*' (8:1), whereas DHL usually did not italicise punctuation; italic punctuation is only recorded when it is part of another variant.

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6. Many pencil corrections were made to TSII while it was being prepared for the typist or the printer, including the marking of foreign words and phrases to be italicised and the alteration of DHL's punctuation to the more usual question mark (e.g. 45:7; 50:9). As most such pencil changes are non-authorial, DHL's original punctuation has been reinstated.

7. A1 does not have the chapter titles which were inserted in EP by DHL at Secker's request. DHL wrote the titles in upper and lower case and sometimes put a full stop after them in EP, but E1 printed the word 'Chapter' and the titles in capitals with no stop; emendation to lower-case type and deletion of the full stops have not been recorded.

8. Because of Heseltine's threatened lawsuit Secker agreed to change the name 'Pussum' and 'the Pussum' to 'Minette', and references to 'Pussums' to 'Minettes'. This was done in E1a (on signatures D and G) and on more than sixty occasions in E2. The original name has been restored.

9. Inconsistencies in DHL's hyphenation have been regularised according to majority usage in this text. Inconsistencies in paragraphing have also been regularised.

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Chapter I

Sisters*

Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen* sat one morning in the window-bay of their father's house in Beldover,* working and talking. Ursula was stitching a piece of brightly-coloured embroidery, and Gudrun was drawing upon a board which she held on her knee. They were mostly silent, talking as their thoughts strayed through their minds. 5

"Ursula," said Gudrun, "don't you *really want* to get married?"

Ursula laid her embroidery in her lap and looked up. Her face was calm and considerate. 10

"I don't know," she replied. "It depends how you mean."

Gudrun was slightly taken aback. She watched her sister for some moments.

"Well," she said, ironically, "it usually means one thing!—But don't you think, anyhow, you'd be—" she darkened slightly—"in a better position than you are in now?" 15

A shadow came over Ursula's face.

"I might," she said. "But I'm not sure."

Again Gudrun paused, slightly irritated. She wanted to be quite definite. 20

"You don't think one needs the *experience* of having been married?" she asked.

"Do you think it need *be* an experience?" replied Ursula.

"Bound to be, in some way or other," said Gudrun, coolly. "Possibly undesirable, but bound to be an experience of some sort." 25

"Not really," said Ursula. "More likely to be the end of experience."

Gudrun sat very still, to attend to this.

"Of course," she said, "there's *that* to consider." 30

This brought the conversation to a close. Gudrun, almost angrily, took up her rubber and began to rub out part of her drawing. Ursula stitched absorbedly.

"You wouldn't consider a good offer?" asked Gudrun.

"I think I've rejected several," said Ursula. 35

“Really!” Gudrun flushed dark.—“But anything really worth while? Have you *really*?”

“A thousand a year, and an awfully nice man. I liked him awfully,” said Ursula.

5 “Really! But weren’t you fearfully tempted?”

“In the abstract—but not in the concrete,” said Ursula. “When it comes to the point, one isn’t even tempted.—Oh, if I were tempted, I’d marry like a shot.—I’m only tempted *not* to.” The faces of both sisters suddenly lit up with amusement.

10 “Isn’t it an amazing thing,” cried Gudrun, “how strong the temptation is, not to!”

They both laughed, looking at each other. In their hearts they were frightened.

15 There was a long pause, whilst Ursula stitched and Gudrun went on with her sketch. The sisters were women, Ursula twenty-six and Gudrun twenty-five. But both had the remote, virgin look of modern girls, sisters of Artemis rather than of Hebe.* Gudrun was very beautiful, passive, soft-skinned, soft-limbed. She wore a dress of dark-blue silky stuff, with ruches of blue and green linen lace in the neck and sleeves; and she had emerald-green stockings.* Her look of
20 confidence and diffidence contrasted with Ursula’s sensitive expectancy. The provincial people, intimidated by Gudrun’s perfect sang froid and exclusive bareness of manner, said of her: “She is a smart woman.” She had just come back from London, where she
25 had spent several years, working at an art-school, as a student, and living a studio life.

“I was hoping now for a man to come along,” Gudrun said, suddenly catching her underlip between her teeth, and making a strange grimace, half sly smiling, half anguish.

30 Ursula was afraid.

“So you have come home, expecting him here?” she laughed.

35 “Oh my dear,” cried Gudrun, strident, “I wouldn’t go out of my way to look for him. But if there did happen to come along a highly attractive individual of sufficient means—well—” she tailed off ironically. Then she looked searchingly at Ursula, as if to probe her. “Don’t you find yourself getting bored?” she asked of her sister. “Don’t you find, that things fail to materialise? *Nothing materialises!* Everything withers in the bud.”

“What withers in the bud?” asked Ursula.

40 “Oh, everything—oneself—things in general.”

Sisters

9

There* was a pause, whilst each sister vaguely considered her fate.

“It does frighten one,” said Ursula, and again there was a pause.

“But do you hope to get anywhere by just marrying?”

“It seems to be the inevitable next step,” said Gudrun.

Ursula pondered this, with a little bitterness. She was a class 5
mistress herself, in Willey Green Grammar School, as she had been
for some years.

“I know,” she said, “it seems like that when one thinks in the
abstract. But really imagine it: imagine any man one knows, imagine
him coming home to one every evening, and saying ‘Hello,’ and 10
giving one a kiss—”

There was a blank pause.

“Yes,” said Gudrun, in a narrowed voice. “It’s just impossible.
The man makes it impossible.”

“Of course there’s children—” said Ursula, doubtfully. 15

Gudrun’s face hardened.

“Do you *really* want children, Ursula?” she asked coldly.

A dazzled, baffled look came on Ursula’s face.

“One feels it is still beyond one,” she said.

“*Do* you feel like that?” asked Gudrun. “I get no feeling whatever 20
from the thought of bearing children.”

Gudrun looked at Ursula with a mask-like, expressionless face.
Ursula knitted her brows.

“Perhaps it isn’t genuine,” she faltered. “Perhaps one doesn’t
really want them, in one’s soul—only superficially.” 25

A hardness came over Gudrun’s face. She did not want to be too
definite.

“When one thinks of other people’s children—” said Ursula.

Again Gudrun looked at her sister, almost hostile.

“Exactly,” she said, to close the conversation. 30

The two sisters worked on in silence, Ursula having always that
strange brightness of an essential flame that is caught, meshed,
contravened. She lived a good deal by herself, to herself, working,
passing on from day to day, and always thinking, trying to lay hold on
life, to grasp it in her own understanding. Her active living was 35
suspended, but underneath, in the darkness, something was coming
to pass. If only she could break through the last integuments! She
seemed to try to put her hands out, like an infant in the womb, and
she could not, not yet. Still she had a strange prescience, an
intimation of something yet to come. 40

She laid down her work and looked at her sister. She thought Gudrun so *charming*, so infinitely charming, in her softness and her fine, exquisite richness of texture and delicacy of line. There was a certain playfulness about her too, such a piquancy of ironic suggestion, such an untouched reserve. Ursula admired her with all her soul.

“Why did you come home, Prune?”* she asked.

Gudrun knew she was being admired. She sat back from her drawing and looked at Ursula, from under her finely-curved lashes.

“Why did I come back, Ursula?” she repeated. “I have asked myself, a thousand times.”

“And don’t you know?”

“Yes, I think I do. I think my coming back home was just *reculer pour mieux sauter*.”*

And she looked with a long, slow look of knowledge at Ursula.

“I know!” cried Ursula, looking slightly dazzled and falsified, and as if she did *not* know. “But where can one jump *to*?”

“Oh, it doesn’t matter,” said Gudrun, somewhat superbly. “If one jumps over the edge, one is bound to land somewhere.”

“But isn’t it very risky?” asked Ursula.

A slow, mocking smile dawned on Gudrun’s face.

“Ah!” she said, laughing. “What is it all but words!”

And so again she closed the conversation. But Ursula was still brooding.

“And how do you find home, now you have come back to it?” she asked.

Gudrun paused for some moments, coldly, before answering. Then, in a cold, truthful voice, she said:

“I find myself completely out of it.”

“And father?”

Gudrun looked at Ursula, almost with resentment, as if brought to bay.

“I haven’t thought about him: I’ve refrained,” she said coldly.

“Yes,” wavered Ursula; and the conversation was really at an end.

The sisters found themselves confronted by a void, a terrifying chasm, as if they had looked over the edge.

They worked on in silence for some time. Gudrun’s cheek was flushed with repressed emotion. She resented its having been called into being.

“Shall we go out and look at that wedding?” she asked at length, in a voice that was too casual.